



National Consumer Protection Week

Dear Editor:

Marketing and telecommunications advances in the Information Age give everyone—even con artists—the power to boost the sophistication and lure of a sales pitch. Fraud promoters now masquerade as national firms, using telemarketing, direct mail, television or the Internet to reach consumers. Personal computers, desktop publishing software and affordable video equipment are lending the look of legitimacy to bogus sales pitches, and millions of consumers are taking the bait.

A group of federal agencies, national, state and local law enforcement organizations, advocacy groups and private-sector companies have joined forces to promote the second annual National Consumer Protection Week to help consumers protect themselves when they shop from the comfort of home.

Shopping from home is convenient and offers a wide range of choices to time-strapped consumers. But like traditional shopping, at-home shopping is not without risk. Whether consumers are ordering from a telemarketer, a direct-mail advertiser, a television shopping network, an Internet-based company or a door-to-door salesperson, they need to know their rights, understand the risks and know where to call for help.

This year's NCPW campaign offers great opportunities for some consumers to get smarter about at-home shopping—and for others to share their experiences with colleagues, neighbors or family members. Let's all take advantage of the many education materials being distributed during the campaign. For more information, visit the NCPW web site at **www.consumer.gov**.

Among the organizers of NCPW are the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Federal Trade Commission, the Consumer Federation of America, AARP, the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators, the National Consumers League and the National Association of Attorneys General.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME AND ORGANIZATION]